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A Message from the Minister

Honourable Stan Hagen
Minister of Children and Family Development

It is my privilege to continue to serve as the Minister of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for British Columbia. The work of MCFD is clearly among the most important undertaken by government. Over the past 10 months, I have gained an even greater understanding and respect for this ministry, and for the thousands of staff and service providers whose daily efforts improve the lives of so many people. After the election, I asked Premier Campbell for the opportunity to continue in the role of minister, and I am honoured to be here today.

This is an exciting time within the ministry. Over the past four years, we have made significant progress in achieving our vision of healthy children and families living in safe, caring and inclusive communities.

In the Child and Family Development (CFD) area, we are seeing positive results from the service transformation and practice shifts that have been implemented over the past few years, and we expect even greater success in the future. In Aboriginal CFD, we continue to work collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples to increase culturally appropriate services delivered by Aboriginal communities for their children and families.

Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) is another area where the work of ministry staff and service providers is making a difference. The implementation of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan has included the addition of more than 100 new regional mental health positions in the last few months.

The provision of quality, affordable Child Care for British Columbians continues to be a ministry priority. An agreement with the federal government with respect to Child Care funding is expected very shortly. This funding will assist BC in meeting the varied needs of parents in large and small communities across the province.

Earlier this month, we reached a significant milestone with the establishment of Community Living British Columbia as a Crown agency. In creating an organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities, we have made an important step in advancing the Community Living movement in BC.

None of these initiatives, or the many others underway across the ministry, could be accomplished without the ongoing dedication and commitment of staff and service providers. I thank you for continually striving to find new and innovative ways to ensure the best outcome for those you serve. I look forward to the coming years as we work together to build a stronger future for the children and families of this province.

Accreditation - 100th Agency Makes the Grade!

This month, the ministry and our service providers achieved an important milestone. The 100th contracted agency has earned accreditation status. Accreditation is one of the key strategies in the ministry's accountability and performance improvement plan and is a significant accomplishment for each agency.

Accreditation is required by service providers that have $500,000 or more in annual contracts with the ministry. The deadline for these agencies to achieve accreditation is September 2006. .../continued page 2

BRITISH COLUMBIA
Ministry of Children and Family Development

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca

FAMILY MATTERS
YOUR CONNECTION TO THE MINISTRY OF CHILDREN & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT & OUR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Welcome Back Minister Reid

Honourable
Linda Reid
Minister of State
for Child Care

On June 16th, Linda Reid was appointed Minister of State for Child Care. This newly created portfolio will focus on innovation in child care policy and practice, engage in an ongoing dialogue with parents and early childhood educators, and honor professionalism in the child care sector. Minister Reid brings to her new role a wealth of experience on children's issues and a passion for improving the lives of BC families.

"Stimulating, quality, affordable child care is fundamental, not only to the child's development, but to the overall health and stability of the family," said Reid. "It's something all B.C. families deserve. Premier Campbell recognizes this, which is why he's devoted a special Cabinet position to child care."

Minister Reid previously served as Minister of State for Early Childhood Development. Her work in this area over the past four years has been critical in raising awareness of the lifelong impact of early learning.

"If you place a child in a situation where learning forms the basis of every activity, that child will be better prepared for school, more socially capable and a happier, more confident person for life," said Reid. "I am very proud of the progress and accomplishments of the past four years. Initiatives like Roots of Empathy, Success by 6, and HELP will provide the tools that our youngest citizens need to have a bright, healthy future."

Linda Reid has been the MLA for Richmond East since 1991. She served in a variety of critic roles for the Official Opposition, including Children and Families, Health, Attorney General, Municipal Affairs, and Science, Technology and Research. She also sat as a member of the Government Caucus Committee on Education.

Prior to becoming an MLA, Minister Reid was a language therapist, teacher, and school administrator for the Richmond School District. She holds two degrees from UBC: a bachelor of arts in education and a master of arts specializing in education, exceptional learners, language acquisition and public administration.

Minister Reid has a long history of community service. She has been involved with a variety of organizations, including the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Council for Exceptional Children, and the Family Court Committee of Richmond. Her leadership roles include serving as BC chair for the Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind and as a director of the Garden City Hospice Society. She was also a founding member of the Richmond Chinatown Lions Club and was chair of the British Columbia Youth Parliament board from 1986 to 1991.

Minister Reid is mother to two children, Olivia who is 5 and Will who is 1, and lives in Richmond with her husband, Sheldon.

Accreditation cont'd...

One service provider that recently went through the accreditation process is the Victoria Association for Community Living. Ellen Tarshis, the association's Executive Director, says the accreditation process was hard work, but the end result made it all worth it.

"It allowed us the focus and motivation to put a great number of important activities and documents in place, something we had been wanting to do for a long time. At the same time, it builds your team, confidence, and service quality."

AiMHi, in Prince George, recently completed its first site survey. The accreditation process has been very positive for the agency.

"Without question, this entire process was the single most exciting and profound learning experience in our agency over the past 15 years," says Melinda Heidsma, AiMHi's Executive Director, Direct Care.

Current research indicates that compliance with accreditation standards by agencies is associated with higher degrees of positive client change. Agencies that have earned accreditation are to be commended. As the leaders in the province, the first 100 accredited agencies will receive a Certificate of Achievement in honour of their successful accreditation outcome.

An important component of agencies' success with accreditation is the work of mentors who share their resources and provide support to other agencies preparing for accreditation. Mentors' assistance is a valuable and necessary part of the accreditation process. There are currently 58 mentors in the province and many others joining the mentor network as the next wave of agencies prepare for accreditation in the coming year.

The ministry extends its congratulations to all accredited agencies, and our thanks to all mentors and their sponsoring agencies who have contributed to successful accreditation outcomes.

A list of accredited agencies can be found at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/accreditation/agencies.htm

Information on the accreditation process can be found at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/accreditation/index.htm, or contact Sara Bristow at: sara.bristow@gov.bc.ca.

SIGN ME UP

Please add me to your electronic distribution list.

Inner-city Girlz Create a Community of Support

A group of adolescent girls in downtown Vancouver have discovered the power of supporting one another.

The teens are part of the Girlz Group. The project helps young women develop their skills and confidence. It also helps youth workers and educators overcome barriers to academic success for teen-aged girls in one of the region's most economically challenged communities. A recent ministry grant of $28,800 will help the program continue another year.

The Girlz Group was formed in 2003 in response to concerns about a group of adolescent girls who were bullying and engaging in criminal activity in the Vancouver East Side. The Vancouver School Board (VSB) asked Dr. Marlene Moretti, professor of psychology at SFU who studies girls' aggression, to give a presentation on her research and suggestions for intervention. This led to a discussion with Ron Scott, community schools coordinator with the VSB, and the emergence of a partnership between VSB and SFU's Psychology Department and the School of Criminology.
Dr. Margaret Jackson, from Criminology, came on board with her expertise on participatory action research, the model upon which the Girlz Group was built.

"A lot of this was initiated by concerns about girls being victimized in our community and becoming involved in violence themselves," says Dr. Moretti. "We needed a way to bring the girls together and to support them to change without imposing a program on them."

The girls, with the assistance of group leaders, work on various projects. They have developed a newsletter, poster presentation, and a video. The projects are designed to teach girls life skills that can reduce victimization in their lives.

Scott originally conceived of the Girlz Group. "In consultation with some of the girls, we decided this needed to be a youth-driven, adult-facilitated group," Scott says. "From day one, we worked very hard to keep the girls in the driver's seat in terms of setting goals and direction."

Twenty girls initially joined the group. Fifteen girls have stayed with the group

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"They are the experts on their lives, and they've informed us in so many ways."

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for two years and new members will soon be invited to join. The girls meet three times per month. They talk frankly about discrimination, victimization, and violence in their lives. The group is predominantly Aboriginal, so racism is a recurring issue. In an innovative approach, the girls are paid $10 per meeting as consultants.

"They are the experts on their lives," explains Dr. Jackson, "and they've informed us in so many ways."

The changes in the girls have been dramatic. The girls' respect for themselves and others has grown. Their drug use has diminished. And they have learned non-violent ways to resolve conflicts. "These girls have a lot more strengths than they realize," Scott says.

The project uses a community development model. This approach has improved the community's ability to respond to the complex needs of inner-city girls dealing with multiple disadvantages. Community support and respect has grown and the girls have gained a sense of personal ownership and pride.

That sense of ownership and pride has inspired them to share their story. The girls have made presentations to university classes and at conferences such as the Annual BC Crime Prevention Symposium.

"There are so many opportunities to do different things, like go to conferences and experience different things," says Jenny Louie, a 19-year-old member. "It gives us something to do and it gives us a positive place where we can express ourselves."

Some participants will soon move into mentoring or group-leader-in-training positions. The current participants are developing the criteria for accepting additional members in the fall.

Start-up funding for the Girlz Group project was provided by the National Crime Prevention Council, Heritage Canada, FREDA Research Centre on Violence Against Women and Children, and the Institute of Gender and Health, Canadian Institute of Health Research.

For more information about the Girlz Group, contact Ron Scott at rjscott@vsb.bc.ca.

A Hair-Razing Fund Raiser

Cowichan Valley MCFD staff are participating in the TOUR de ROCK – Cops for Cancer fundraising event. Community Services Manager Mark Armitage, Team Leader Laurie Vasey, Social Worker Mylisa Edison and Resource Social Worker Debra Underhill are having their heads shaved to raise money, and are encouraging more staff to join them. The Cowichan Valley offices are challenging the rest of the Vancouver Island Region to participate, either by fundraising for the staff in the Cowichan Valley or by having staff in other offices volunteer to shave their heads and raise funds in their local areas. For more info, contact Lesley Petrie of the Canadian Cancer Society at 1-800-663-7892 or 250-380-2352, e-mail: lpetrie@bc.cancer.ca.

New Guides Help Transition to Adulthood

The transition to adulthood can be challenging for youth with special needs and their families. Two recently published guides are designed to ease this passage.

Your Future Now: A Transition Planning and Resource Guide for Youth with Special Needs and Their Families takes young people, step by step, through the process of developing an individualized plan for the future.

As adolescents near adulthood, many important decisions about education, employment, living arrangements, and finances need to be made. This first guide can assist youth and their families to build a transition planning team, clarify needs, set goals, and identify services and supports needed in the future.

The second guide, *Transition Planning for Youth with Special Needs: A Community Support Guide* is designed for social workers, teachers, and other community partners. It provides additional information based on best practices to help support successful transition planning for youth with special needs.

The guides were introduced at the 18th annual Family Support Institute Parent Resource Weekend in April. They were developed because effective transition planning was identified by parents, service providers, advocates, and ministry staff as a critical component of services for youth with special needs.

"We've had high demand," says Shirley Meaning, MCFD Program Manager for Children and Youth with Special Needs. "People are quite excited and they're asking for more."

About 3,600 copies of *Your Future Now* and 1,700 *Community Support Guides* were initially mailed to schools, service providers, and others. A second printing of 2,000 of each guide was distributed in June. Additional copies have been provided upon request.

To encourage youth, families, and others to offer input in how the guides evolve, feedback cards are provided inside the guides. Comments received have included suggestions for enhancing the guides and remarks such as, "This is a very valuable resource," "The information... is easy to understand," and, "So helpful..."

The guides were developed with assistance from parents, community service providers, and ministry partners from Health Services, Human Resources, Education, and Advanced Education.

Written in plain language, the guides have a simple, easy-to-follow layout. Prior to the publication of these guides, youth and their families had to develop a transition plan from scratch – without a template, Meaning says.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development is committed to revising the guides to better meet the needs of youth with special needs, their families and the community. If you have comments about the guides, or suggestions for future issues, please contact the Children and Youth with Special Needs Branch at: MCF.TransitionGuide@gov.bc.ca

Electronic copies of the guides are available at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/adulthood.htm

Hard copies can be requested from the Children and Youth with Special Needs Branch at 250-952-6044.

The Book Corner

Issues & Ethics in the Helping Professions, 6th edition

Author: Gerald Corey, 2003

Up-to-date and challenging, this best-selling text is a practical manual that helps future and current professionals deal with ethical issues that they will confront at the various stages in their development. The authors provide readers with the basis for discovering their own guidelines within the broad limits of professional codes of ethics and divergent theoretical positions. They raise what they consider to be central issues, present a range of diverse views on these issues, discuss their position, and provide readers with many opportunities to refine their own thinking and to actively develop their own position. The authors explore such questions as: What role do the therapist's personal values play in the counseling relationship? What ethical responsibilities and rights do clients and therapists have? What considerations are involved in adapting counseling practice to diverse client populations?

- publisher

View reviews at:
www.brookscole.com (search for title)

Provided courtesy of the Health and Human Services Library Serving the Ministries of Human Resources, Children and Family Development, and Health.

E-mail: hlth.library@gov.bc.ca

A New Direction for Community Living

Stability and continuity are the top priorities during the transfer of responsibility for the delivery of services and supports for adults with developmental disabilities.

Also known as Adult Community Living Services (CLS), the official transfer of responsibility from MCFD to Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) occurred on July 1st.

CLBC was created because individuals with developmental disabilities and their families told government they wanted more choice, flexibility, and input in designing the services they receive.

To ensure stability, individuals and families will receive services from the same people and in the same locations as they did previously. The only difference for families is that former MCFD Community Living social workers are now employed by CLBC.

Over time, CLBC will implement a new service delivery model that will provide individuals with more service choices and increased options for how those services are delivered. The transformation of services will take place over the coming 12 to 18 months, which will allow time for careful planning and implementation of service changes and improvements.

Regarding services for children and youth with special needs (CYSN), both the ministry and CLBC remain committed to the separation of services as outlined in the Children's Agreement of June 2004. To maintain continuity for families, the ministry requested that from July 1, 2005, through June 2006, CLBC staff remain the point of contact for children and their families who previously received service through Children's Community Living Services. This will ensure there are no disruptions or inconveniences for those who access services. During this time, MCFD will remain responsible for the budget, policy, monitoring and accountability.

Visit the CLBC website at www.communitylivingbc.ca.

More about the transfer of services: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/cls/information.htm.

'Rights 2 Success' Project Seeks Your Input

Rights 2 Success (R2S) is a partnership project sponsored by the Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks (FBCYICN), the Child and Youth Officer for BC (CYO), and MCFD. In consultation with youth and key stakeholders, a workshop has been developed to provide children and youth 'in care' and 'at risk' with opportunities to learn about their rights and responsibilities and to teach them self-advocacy skills.

As guardians and care providers the *Child, Family, and Community Service Act* requires that we inform children and youth in care about their rights, involve them in decisions that affect them, and ensure their rights are respected.

The R2S Workshop has received approval and support to proceed to the piloting stage of the project. Final revision of the workshop content is being completed over the summer and the pilots (hopefully 2 in each region) will commence in the fall. We invite feedback from youth participants, guardians, caregivers, and community agencies to assist us in fine-tuning and evaluating the workshop and the partnership delivery model prior to provincial implementation.

For more info, contact Annette Harding at: Annette.Harding@gov.bc.ca.

COMING EVENTS

August 12: **International Youth Day**, www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyouthday.htm

September 11: **Grandparents Day**, www.tcpnow.com/kits/acrossgen.html

September 15 & 16: BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations presents: **Grief, Loss & Transition: A Workshop for Trainers**, Burnaby. Info: 1-800-663-9999

September 18 - 24: **Prostate Cancer Awareness Week** www.prostatecancer.ca/english/event/awareness/index.html

The **grand opening** of the **Westshore Child, Youth and Family Centre** is planned for **late September**. The facility is part of the Western Communities Child, Youth and Family Services Project. More info: www.queenalexandra.org/west_shore.htm

September 21 - October 1: **50th Anniversary Conference and AGM for the BC Association for Community Living**, Richmond. Info: www.bcacl.org/documents/General_Files/bcacl_conference_2005.pdf

October 3 - 10: **National Family Week** www.familyservicecanada.org/nfw/2005/ index_e.html

October 3 - 10: **Mental Illness Awareness Week** www.miaw-ssmm.ca

October 26 & 27: **Provincial Conference on Cultural Connectivity, Roots, and Permanency for Children**, Prince George. More info: 250-565-4367

Kudos To...

The Third Step Program on the North Shore has received a City of North Vancouver Civic Youth Award for Outstanding Supporter of Youth. Third Step is an alternate school for at-risk youth. It has provided education/day programs for the past 8 years. Keep up the good work!

Congratulations to James Gorman on his appointment as Acting Deputy Minister of the BC Public Service Agency. James served as MCFD's Assistant Deputy Minister for Management Services between 2003 and 2005. He has been a tremendous asset to the ministry and will be greatly missed! We wish James all the best in his new position.

Sarf Ahmed has assumed the role of Assistant Deputy Minister, Management Services, on an acting basis. Sarf was previously the ministry's Senior Financial Officer. Congratulations Sarf!

On June 16th, Deputy Minister Alison MacPhail honoured Janet Neal, Wilma Drew, and Gail Crowley of the Finance and Administration Branch, presenting them with Improvement Awards for developing and implementing a new process for rolling over thousands of ministry contracts into the new fiscal year. The new process avoids the need for re-approval of contracts by ministry expense authorities around the province. This process saved the ministry an estimated $25,000 and was also adopted across government.

In June, the Deputy Minister also presented an Appreciation Award to Ned Whittla of the Finance and Administration Branch for his valuable contribution in managing the accounting function for the Interim Authority for Community Living B.C. during the 2004/05 fiscal year. Congratulations Ned!

Two ministry employees had the 'distinct' honour of being nominated for the 11th annual Greater Victoria YM-YWCA Women of Distinction Awards, held May 19th. Jane Cowell was nominated in the Workplace Leadership Category and Lorie Hall was nominated in the Neighbourhood Enhancement Category. Congratulations to Jane and Lorie on this well-earned recognition!

This spring, ministry staff have displayed great community spirit by assisting with a number of worthy causes. For example, Team Leader Gareth Griffiths and Parole Officer Niloofar Poulad in the Maple Ridge office raised nearly $1,000 for the Kidney Foundation. MCFD staff from all over the Fraser region contributed.

Also going the extra mile was the Campbell River MCFD Team, which participated in the very successful Relay for Life on June 11-12. The team raised nearly $2,000 by arranging events and obtaining sponsors. Huge thanks to the Adoption Team for providing the banner for the MCFD tent.

Another example of great 'heart' was shown at this year's Heart and Stroke 'Fit For Life' event on April 24th in Victoria. It was the biggest yet, with the Kid's Fun Run surely the brightest part of the day. For the fifth year, MCFD sponsored the Fun Run, which was coordinated by Lisa Whitehouse, Team Assistant with the Adoption and Guardianship Team. She praised Adoptions and Resource staff for their assistance.

Alison MacPhail (2nd from left) presented Wilma Drew, Janet Neal & Gail Crowley with Improvement Awards through the Public Service Agency Employee Recognition Program.

In Brief

New Clinic Welcomes Families

The Chilliwack MCFD office has partnered with the Ann Davis Transition Society in opening the Walk-In Family Counseling clinic. The clinic is aimed at helping families with children up to 19 years of age process their concerns and formulate ideas for change. Therapists are available at the Ann Davis site on Monday and Tuesday evenings from 6-8 p.m., and at the MCFD Yale St. office in Chilliwack on Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 6-8 p.m. For more info, call 604-792-2760 or 604-795-8481.

High-tech Tool Targets Depression

A new web-based self-help tool to assist youth with mild to moderate depression was launched during Mental Health Week and copies were provided to family physicians, school counsellors and CYMH clinicians. The self-help tool is available in a "youth friendly" magazine format and is downloadable from the ministry website: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/pdf/dwd_writable.pdf

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Send comments or content ideas to:

MCF.NewsletterFeedback@gov.bc.ca